

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Greggton Commercial Historic District
Other name/site number: NA
Name of related multiple property listing: NA

2. Location

Street & number: Bounded by West Marshall Avenue/US Highway 80 to the south, North Supply Street to the west, West Aztec Alley to the north, and Pine Tree Road to the east
City or town: Longview State: Texas County: Gregg

Not for publication: [] Vicinity: []

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] nomination [] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [X] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following levels of significance:
[] national [] statewide [X] local

Applicable National Register Criteria: [X] A [] B [X] C [] D

[Signature] Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer Date 3/15/24
Signature of certifying official / Title
Texas Historical Commission
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria
Signature of commenting or other official Date
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
[] entered in the National Register
[] determined eligible for the National Register
[] determined not eligible for the National Register.
[] removed from the National Register
[] other, explain: _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Greggton Commercial Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Private
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Federal

Category of Property

<input type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
8	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
8	0	total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions: COMMERCE/TRADE: business, restaurant, department store, professional, specialty store

Current Functions: VACANT

7. Description

Architectural Classification: LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: American Commercial; MODERN MOVEMENT: Art Deco

Principal Exterior Materials: BRICK, GLASS, CONCRETE, CERAMIC TILE

Narrative Description (see pages 7-7 through 7-12)

Greggton Commercial Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
<input type="checkbox"/>	B	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	C	Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
<input type="checkbox"/>	D	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations: NA

Areas of Significance: Commerce, Community Planning and Development; Architecture (*local level*)

Period of Significance: 1930-1959

Significant Dates: 1930

Significant Person (only if criterion b is marked): NA

Cultural Affiliation (only if criterion d is marked): NA

Architect/Builder: NA

Narrative Statement of Significance (see pages 8-13 through 8-21)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography (see pages 9-22 through 9-23)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office (*Texas Historical Commission, Austin*)
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): NA

Greggton Commercial Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: less than one acre

Coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 32.507730° | Longitude: -94.795437° |
| 2. Latitude: 32.507705° | Longitude: -94.794731° |
| 3. Latitude: 32.507244° | Longitude: -94.794441° |
| 4. Latitude: 32.507304° | Longitude: -94.795466° |

Verbal Boundary Description: The nominated boundary is a right quadrilateral encompassing the legal parcels as recorded by the Gregg County Central Appraisal District: LT 4-11 BLK 12 (NCB 3403) NORTH DIVISION (Property ID# 56269-56276), accessed on March 8, 2024. It is sketched on Maps 3 and 4.

Boundary Justification: The boundary was drawn around the eight contiguous commercial buildings that retain integrity from the historic period. The commercial building (3727 W. Marshall Avenue) at the west block end is excluded from the boundary because it was built outside of the period of significance.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Erin Tyson/Architectural Historian and GIS Specialist, Charlotte Adams/Architectural Historian
Organization: HHM & Associates, Inc.
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Date: June 27, 2023

Additional Documentation

Maps (see pages MAP-24 through MAP-28)

Additional items (see pages FIGURE-29 through PHOTO-37)

Photographs (see pages PHOTO-38 through PHOTO-52)

Greggton Commercial Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Photograph Log

All photographs reflect the current appearance of the nominated properties.

Greggton Historic District

Gregg County, Texas

Photographed on December 18, 2021, by Emily Thompson Payne (HHM Inc.)

Photo 1 (TX_Gregg County_Greggton Historic District_0001)

Camera facing northeast down West Marshall Avenue showing all buildings in the proposed historic district (Resource 1 in the foreground, Resource 8 at the far east end).

Photo 2 (TX_Gregg County_Greggton Historic District_0002)

Camera facing northwest down West Marshall Avenue showing all buildings in the proposed historic district (Resource 1 at the far west end, Resource 8 in the foreground)

Photo 3. (TX_Gregg County_Greggton Historic District_0003)

Camera facing northwest showing west end of the proposed historic district (Resources 1, 2, and 3). Note the non-historic age building at the end block that is left out of the proposed boundaries.

Photo 4. (TX_Gregg County_Greggton Historic District_0004)

Camera facing east showing sidewalk along the 3700 block of West Marshall Avenue (photo taken at west side of Resource 4).

Photo 5. (TX_Gregg County_Greggton Historic District_0005)

Camera facing east showing Aztec Alley to the rear (north) of the 3700 block of West Marshall Avenue.

Photo 6. (TX_Gregg County_Greggton Historic District_0006)

Camera facing north showing Resource 1 at 3725 West Marshall Avenue.

Photo 7. (TX_Gregg County_Greggton Historic District_0007)

Camera facing north showing mosaic tile detail depicting oil refinery flare stacks; Resource 1 at 3725 West Marshall Avenue.

Photo 8. (TX_Gregg County_Greggton Historic District_0008)

Camera facing north showing Resource 2 at 3721 West Marshall Avenue. Resources 1 and 3 are pictured to the left and right, respectively.

Photo 9. (TX_Gregg County_Greggton Historic District_0009)

Camera facing north showing Resource 3 at 3719 West Marshall Avenue. Resources 2 and 4 are pictured to the left and right, respectively.

Photo 10. (TX_Gregg County_Greggton Historic District_0010)

Camera facing north showing Resource 4 at 3717 West Marshall Avenue.

Photo 11. (TX_Gregg County_Greggton Historic District_0011)

Camera facing north showing Resource 5 at 3713 West Marshall Avenue.

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Photo 12. (TX_Gregg County_Greggton Historic District_0012)

Camera facing north showing Resource 6 at 3709-11 West Marshall Avenue. Resources 5 and 7 are pictured to the left and right, respectively.

Photo 13. (TX_Gregg County_Greggton Historic District_0013)

Camera facing east showing canopies of Resources 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6.

Photo 14. (TX_Gregg County_Greggton Historic District_0014)

Camera facing north showing Resource 7 at 3705-07 West Marshall Avenue. Resource 8 is pictured to the right.

Photo 15. (TX_Gregg County_Greggton Historic District_0015)

Camera facing northwest showing Resource 8 at 3701 West Marshall Avenue. Resource 7 is pictured to the left.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Greggton Commercial Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Narrative Description

The Greggton Commercial Historic District in Longview, Gregg County, is located along the north side of the 3700 block of West Marshall Avenue (US Highway 80/ US Route 80/Dixie Overland Highway/Longview-Gladewater Highway). Encompassing less than one acre, the district is roughly bounded by Supply Street to the west, Aztec Alley to the north, Pine Tree Road to the east, and West Marshall Avenue (a five-lane highway) to the south. A continuous block of eight contributing one- and two-part commercial blocks comprise the district. Built between 1930 and 1955, these buildings reflect the town's growth, which was precipitated by the local discovery of oil in the early 1930s. While other commercial nodes existed in the community, the north side of the 3700 block of West Marshall Avenue represents the best, most intact example of Greggton's development before its decline and subsequent annexation into Longview.

Setting

Located in an area of west Longview that originally developed as the independent unincorporated community of Greggton (annexed in 1959), the Greggton Commercial Historic District is situated on the north side of a busy five-lane highway. It is approximately four miles west of the Gregg County Courthouse in downtown Longview, near the intersection of West Marshall Avenue/US Highway 80 and Pine Tree Road. The land encompassing the district was platted as Block 12 of the "NCB 3403" (plat date unknown). The commercial block is surrounded by a mixture of non-historic age and mid-to-late twentieth-century freestanding commercial development. Within the district, concrete steps, running the length of the block, rise from a street-level sidewalk/parking lane to another block-long sidewalk that runs in front of the buildings (Photos 3 and 4). The block is situated on a gradual incline that slopes down from west to east. Because of this, the buildings are constructed at an angle and set into the ground with the foundations elevated to ensure level floors (Photos 12 and 14). There is a non-historic-age one-part commercial block building, constructed in the 1980s, at the west end of the 3700 block (Photo 3) that is not included within district boundaries. This lot outside the district boundaries had a different one-part commercial block building, constructed in the 1930s that was demolished around 1950.¹ Between 1950 and the close of the period of significance this lot remained vacant.

Layout and Circulation Pattern Development

West Marshall Avenue is part of US Highway 80, which historically spanned the southern United States from east to west. Historically, US Highway 80 also has been known as the Dixie Overland Highway and US Route 80, and the specific stretch of highway that passes through Greggton has been called the Longview-Gladewater Highway. By the 1930s, US Highway 80 (Figure 3) served as a major interstate route on a national level. It also became the main thoroughfare of the Greggton community, making it an ideal location for a commercial hub – the subject block. The original width of the Greggton/West Marshall Avenue stretch of the Dixie Overland Highway/US 80 is unclear, but historic Sanborn maps show that by 1955 the roadway was approximately the same width as today (Map 5). In the 1960s, US Highway 80 began to slowly shorten with Dallas becoming its western terminus, though many of the old roads to the west still exist.² Still, US Highway 80 remained an important street in Greggton, later Longview. Today, West Marshall Avenue comprises a five-lane stretch of the historic highway.

Aztec Alley (Photo 5), which forms the northern boundary of the district, is a paved, single-lane street. The original alley ran closer to the rear elevations of the commercial block but was moved between 1947 and 1957 per historic maps (Figures 2 and 4). The original alignment of the alley is partially paved and lies between Aztec Alley and a buffer of grass and weeds in front of the rear elevation.

¹ The one-story building appears on a historic photo from 1947 but does not appear on the 1955 Sanborn map or on a 1957 aerial image.

² S. Varner, "U.S. Highway 80," Varner Guides American Roads, 2006, accessed June 22, 2023.

<https://www.americanroads.U.S./U.S.highways/U.S.highway80.html>.

Greggton Commercial Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Patterns of Spatial Organization

Longview was originally platted in 1873 (Figure 4) and then re-platted in 1948 (Figure 5). The area historically called Greggton, like the rest of this plat, is organized into a street grid system.

Relationships of Buildings to One Another

The historic district contains eight buildings in the 3700 block of West Marshall Avenue. The buildings have similar massing and materials, are set forward flush with the lot line, and share party walls. Resources 1 and 7 are two stories, so their side elevations are visible at the second story where they rise over their neighboring buildings (Photos 1 and 15). Resources 1-7 are rectangular buildings that are flush at their primary façades; Resource 8 is irregularly shaped and set back slightly from the rest (Photos 2 and 15). Resources 4 and 7, as well as Bay 1 of Resource 1, extend farther north at their rear elevations (Map 5).

Property and Architectural Analysis

The commercial district contains excellent examples of mid-twentieth-century regional commercial architecture. Constructed between 1930 and 1955, the buildings served a variety of business types, including the Big Grocery Store (Resource 4), Smith's Service Station (Resource 8), Daniel's Café, Greggton Recreation Club, Quality Shoe Shop, Cope's Café, Williams Cleaners, Chaffin Five and Dime Store, Covington Barber Shop, Supply Café, Wren's Pharmacy, and the Leird Hotel (Resource 1), which also housed the post office.³ The proposed district's eight commercial buildings share similar construction materials—tan buff brick—and a similar scale – one to two stories in height. Historically, all of the buildings had flat canopies (Figure 6); currently, most of the buildings have flat canopies (Photo 13), though many are not original. Of the eight resources in the district, all are contributing. The buildings display varying degrees of architectural influences and ornamentation. Some buildings (Resources 6, 7, and 8) display no ornamentation (Photos 12 and 14), while some (Resources 2, 3, and 4) feature decorative basketweave brickwork (Photos 8-10). Several buildings have Art Deco stylistic influences. Resources 4 and 5 feature Art Deco-stylized cornices (Photos 10-11). Resource 8, at the east end of the block, is a Modern box-with-canopy gas station (Photo 15). Resource 1, the most ornate of the buildings in the proposed district, features decorative concrete panels carved with geometric patterns and decorative tile panels resembling oil refinery flare stacks (Photo 7).

Resource 1: 3725 West Marshall Avenue — PIDN 56269 (Photo No. 6-7; Map 4)

Resource 1 is a two-story commercial building that today occupies the full width of Lot 4, although historically the eastern and western sides of the building were constructed in different phases between 1931 and 1933. The western side of the building at 3725 West Marshall Avenue initially was constructed around 1931 as the Leird Hotel.⁴ This original portion of the building is organized as a two-part, five-bay commercial block building with tan buff brick walls and Art Deco stylistic influences. By 1933, the Laird Hotel was advertised as offering 28 rooms and porter service, as well as serving as a temporary location for the Greggton Post Office.⁵ Later in 1933, Resource 1 was expanded to the east to create a more permanent location for the Greggton Post Office, dubbed the "Rodden Building."⁶ The eastern addition also used a two-part commercial block form with a five-bay organization and buff brick and Art Deco detailing mimicking the original western portion of the building. Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps show that a solid wall divided the two sections of the building—indicative of the two separate phases of construction. To the west of Lot 4, the western portion of the building shares a party wall with a non-historic-age building outside the district boundaries (3727 West Marshall Avenue). To the east of Lot 4, the eastern portion shares a party wall with Resource 2 (3721 West Marshall Avenue).

³ 1936 Greggton City Directory, no page number.

⁴ "Stop! Look! Listen!" [Laird Hotel ad], *Longview News-Journal*. June 13, 1931, www.newspapers.com.

⁵ "Greggton: Gregg County's New Postoffice Is Now Open And Doing Business in Temporary Location in the Leird Hotel," *Longview News-Journal*, Feb. 16, 1933, www.newspapers.com.

⁶ "Greggton, Now Post Office City, Has Real Chance for Future Growth in Business," *Longview News-Journal*, Feb. 21, 1933, [newspapers.com](http://www.newspapers.com).

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Architecturally, the scale and details unite the two sections of the building. Three brick pilasters—one at each end of the building and one in the middle—with concrete bases and cast concrete tops organize the building’s façade into two nearly symmetrical bays, with storefront displays on the first floor and four window openings on each bay at the second floor. The first floor is relatively simple; each bay contains a storefront system with non-historic aluminum windows and fully glazed non-historic aluminum doors. A non-historic corrugated metal canopy topped by boarded-up transoms separates the first floor from the much more ornate second floor. The second-floor window openings contain one-over-one double-hung wood windows and have cast concrete headers with an Art Deco zigzag pattern as well as cast concrete lintels. The cast concrete tops of the pilasters dividing the nearly identical two bays feature blue tiles in a diamond pattern. The distinction between the two bays comes from ornamental arched blind openings centered between each bay of four windows. While the first bay from the west only has one arched blind opening with cast concrete surround, the second bay has two. Buff brick fills the arched opening in the first bay; the arched openings on the second bay contain mosaic tiles depicting oil refinery flare stacks. Centered above the arches on the second bay, the name “RODDEN” is engraved on a cast concrete plaque (Photo 7). A stepped cast concrete parapet runs the width of the building above this sign.

Resource 2: 3721 West Marshall Avenue - PIDN 56270 (Photo No. 8; Map 4)

The building at 3721 West Marshall Avenue was constructed in 1940. It is a small, narrow, one-part commercial block building with Art Deco stylistic influences. The primary façade is characterized by a storefront display system with a centered entrance flanked by pink-painted buff brick in a common bond pattern. Non-historic aluminum windows and a door fill the storefront and entrance configuration. Historically, the building had a flat canopy; the original has been replaced. The extant metal canopy and boarded transoms top the storefront system. Above the canopy, the brick is arranged in a basket-weave pattern in an expression of its Art Deco influences.

Resource 3: 3719 West Marshall Avenue - PIDN 56271 (Photo No. 9; Map 4)

The building at 3719 West Marshall Avenue was constructed in 1932. It is a one-part commercial block building with Art Deco stylistic influence. The primary elevation is clad in tan, buff brick. The building has a storefront display system consisting of two display windows and a centered entrance containing paired doors. Non-historic aluminum windows and doors fill the openings; brick surrounding the storefront system is laid in a common bond pattern. A flat metal canopy topped by boarded-up transoms tops the storefront display system. Although the building historically had a flat canopy, this is not the original. Above the transoms, the building’s basketweave patterned brick expresses its Art Deco influence. The building shares this in common with its neighbors, Resources 2 and 4.

Resource 4: 3717 West Marshall Avenue - PIDN 56272 (Photo No. 10; Map 4)

The building at 3717 West Marshall Avenue was constructed in 1932 to house the “Big Grocery Store.” The building is a one-part commercial block with Art Deco influences. It is clad in tan, buff brick and is organized into two bays by three brick pilasters – one at each end of the building and one in the middle. The pilasters—which feature a running bond brick pattern—have concrete bases and cast concrete tops that feature Art Deco-influenced geometric patterns. Each bay has a wood-frame storefront topped by a row of transom windows that were boarded at an unknown date. Historic photos (Figures 7-8) show that a flat canopy once extended from the primary façade between the storefront and transoms; this is no longer extant. The brick below the storefront is laid in a running bond pattern, while a basketweave pattern characterizes the brick above the row of transoms. A concrete cornice runs along the building’s flat parapet above the basketweave brickwork. Similar to the pilaster tops, the cornice is also cast with Art Deco-influenced geometric shapes, including semi-suns within concentric triangles.

Resource 5: 3713 West Marshall Avenue - PIDN 56273 (Photo No. 11; Map 4)

The building at 3713 West Marshall Avenue was constructed in 1932. It is a one-part commercial block building with Art Deco stylistic influences. The primary façade is clad in tan, buff brick in a running bond pattern and is organized into two identical bays. Each bay features a storefront display system consisting of two display windows with brick

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bulkheads and a centered, recessed entrance containing paired doors. A flat, corrugated metal canopy spans the width of the façade, separating the display windows from the transoms above. Although the building historically had a flat canopy, this is not the original. The storefront display windows have all been boarded; the transoms on Bay 1 have been boarded up as well. Doors appear to be historic and are partially glazed wood. In contrast with Resources 2 through 4, the buff brick above the transoms is not laid in a basketweave pattern; instead, a single soldier course tops the transoms, and running bond-patterned brick extends from the soldier course up to the building's cast concrete cornice. Echoing Resource 4, the cornice is also cast with Art Deco-influenced geometric shapes, including semi-suns within concentric triangles.

Resource 6: 3709-3711 West Marshall Avenue - PIDN 56274 (Photo No. 12; Map 4)

The building at 3709-3711 West Marshall Avenue was constructed in 1930. It is a one-part commercial block building clad in tan, buff brick. The building is organized into two symmetrical bays, each containing two wood storefront display windows with a centered entrance. The storefront windows appear to have been altered with the construction of higher kneewalls. A flat, corrugated metal canopy spans the width of the façade and is topped by boarded transoms. Although the building historically had a flat canopy, this is not the original. The building lacks ornamentation.

Resource 7: 3705-3707 West Marshall Avenue - PIDN 56275 (Photo No. 14; Map 4)

The building at 3705-3707 West Marshall Avenue was constructed in 1955. It is a two-part commercial block building clad in tan, buff brick. The building contains two bays that are not identical; Bay 1, at the first floor, consists of a centered entrance flanked by two display windows; this configuration echoes that of neighboring Resource 6. Bay 2, at its first floor, has two entrances with a large display window at the east end. The three entrances are identical. The second floor of the building is fenestrated by three evenly spaced openings containing original steel windows; the west and center windows are topped by metal awnings. The second floor of the east elevation of the building is visible above the one-story neighboring building; five steel windows, some topped by metal awnings, fenestrate the elevation. The building lacks ornamentation.

Resource 8: 3701 West Marshall Avenue - PIDN 56276 (Photo No. 15; Map 4)

The building at 3701 West Marshall Avenue was constructed in 1933 as "Sam's Filling Station." It is a Modern box-with-canopy gas station. The building is set back from the rest of the commercial block, and it is polygonal rather than rectangular. The building's flat metal roof extends at an upward angle from the building façade to form a large canopy. The one-story building is clad in buff brick that has been painted white. A storefront display comprised of large, single-light, aluminum windows spans the width of the primary façade, with the primary entrance situated at the east end of the façade. The windows and fully glazed historic door appear to be original.

District Integrity

The Greggton Historic District retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The district retains its historic location and its setting at the north side of US Highway 80; the sidewalks and alleys that comprise the setting are also intact. The district displays integrity of design as an intact block of one- and two-part commercial block buildings that shows subtle influences of the Art Deco style. The buff brick and cast concrete that characterize the building façades demonstrate integrity of materials, and the workmanship is evident through the cast concrete geometric patterns and basketweave brick decorating four of the resources. Finally, the district retains integrity of feeling and association with commercial business through its distinctive commercial block appearance and the continued commercial use of Resource 8.

Common alterations within the district targeted replacement of deteriorated materials in order to allow continued commercial use, as well as protection against vandalism as buildings were abandoned. Around the 1950s or 1960s, many buildings replaced original wood storefronts and windows with metal ones. Over time, however, use declined, vacancy increased, some windows were broken, and a number of building owners boarded up windows (storefront and

Greggton Commercial Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

transoms) and doors (Photos 6-11). The canopies on some buildings have also been replaced or removed (Photo 13). However, these alterations are reversible and do not impair the buildings' ability to communicate their historic style and form, and therefore all of the buildings within the district were evaluated as having sufficient integrity to contribute to the overall character of the district. As a result, the district as a whole retains sufficient integrity to collectively convey the historical significance and development of this area of Longview.

Greggton Commercial Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Inventory

	Resource No.	Address	Year Built (approx.)	Use Classification	Stylist Influence	C/NC Status
				Form		
	1	3725 West Marshall Avenue	1931-1933	Commercial Two-part commercial block	Art Deco	C
	2	3721 West Marshall Avenue	1940	Commercial One-part commercial block	Art Deco	C
	3	3719 West Marshall Avenue	1932	Commercial One-part commercial block	Art Deco	C
	4	3717 West Marshall Avenue	1932	Commercial One-part commercial block	Art Deco	C
	5	3713 West Marshall Avenue	1932	Commercial One-part commercial block	Art Deco	C
	6	3709-11 West Marshall Avenue	1930	Commercial One-part commercial block	Commercial	C
	7	3705-07 West Marshall Avenue	1955	Commercial Two-part commercial block	Commercial	C
	8	3701 West Marshall Avenue	1935	Commercial Gas station – Box with attached canopy	Modern	C

Greggton Commercial Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Statement of Significance

The Greggton Commercial Historic District in Greggton, Gregg County, is a discreet collection of early to mid-twentieth-century commercial blocks associated with the town's development and growth as an industrial supply center for the East Texas Oilfield. Originally called Willow Springs, the small farming community grew in the 1930s following the local discovery of oil and state-sponsored highway improvements. Commercial buildings were subsequently constructed along the highway to serve Greggton and those traveling between Longview and Gladewater. The nominated district is a continuous row of eight commercial blocks built between 1930 and 1955 and that was Greggton's first business district. At various times, these buildings housed a hotel, post office, medical offices, pharmacy, grocery store, and auto repair shop. The nominated district is good local example of early 20th century trends in commercial architecture found on main streets across the United States. Made of blonde brick, the grouping of one and two-part commercial blocks demonstrate a cohesive appearance, unified scale and materials, and some modest Art Deco details, including a tile mosaic depicting the local oil industry. When Longview annexed Greggton in 1959, the area faced an economic downturn as a result of a dwindling oil supply, and many of the buildings have stood vacant for years. The Greggton Commercial Historic District is nominated to the National Register under Criterion A in the areas of Community Planning and Development and Commerce and under Criterion C in the area of Architecture, at the local level of significance. The period of significance starts in 1930, representing the year of construction of the district's oldest resource, and ends in 1959 when Longview annexed Greggton and the community's commercial district declined.

Criterion A

The Greggton Historic District contains eight commercial buildings constructed in the 1930s through the 1950s along the main commercial corridor in the community then known as Greggton. Founded as Willow Springs about four miles west of Longview in east-central Gregg County during the late nineteenth century, the community was renamed Greggton when its first post office opened in 1933. Greggton developed into an industrial and commercial center after the discovery of oil in the East Texas Oilfield in the early 1930s. Traffic along US Highway 80 between Longview and Gladewater—the road segment along which the district is located—increased dramatically during the oil boom years, furthering commercial development. The collection of buildings within the Greggton Historic District served as the first commercial hub of Greggton and reflects the economic growth of the town associated with the East Texas Oilfield. While other commercial nodes developed in Greggton throughout the same period, the north side of the 3700 block of West Marshall Avenue represents the earliest, most cohesive, and most intact example of its commercial flourishing. As such, the district is eligible at the local level under Criterion A in the areas of Community Planning and Development and Commerce.

Area of Significance: Community Planning and Development and Commerce

Arrival of Railroads in Gregg County Leads to the Formation of Willow Springs

The arrival of the railroads and the development of Gregg County during the 1870s brought significant changes leading to the formation of Willow Springs, among other towns. When Southern Pacific Railroad Company (later the Texas and Pacific Railroad) decided to extend the rail from the then-westernmost stop at Marshall, Texas, located in neighboring Harrison County, it opted to bypass existing communities.⁷ Rather than building depots in established places, railroad companies at the time recognized the potential for real estate and business opportunities by creating townsites around new railroad stops. Thus, the Southern Pacific Railroad avoided the pioneer community of Earpville along the old Marshall-Tyler Road (today US Highway 80) and purchased land just west of the settlement from Ossamus Hitch Methvin, Sr. for a new town, establishing the community of Longview by early 1871 (Earpville was

⁷ Beth Valenzuela and Elizabeth Porterfield, "Gregg County Survey Plan," prepared for the Gregg County Historical Commission, August 2018, E-3.

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located in what is today central-west Longview, about 4.5 miles west of the future site of the historic district).⁸ Financial problems prohibited the railroad company from constructing further west for two years, so as the western terminus of the line, Longview became an important regional trading center for East Texas. In 1872, the International Railroad (later the International-Great Northern) built a connection between Longview and Palestine, in Anderson County, to the southwest. The new line joined the Southern Pacific about a mile east of the Longview depot, and the area became known as Longview Junction.⁹

The railroads transformed northeast Texas physically and economically, prompting the emergence of new counties from existing larger ones. In April 1873, the Thirteenth Texas Legislature marked off parts of southern Upshur County to create Gregg County, named in honor of Confederate war figure John B. Gregg.¹⁰ Longview became the county seat. One year later, the Fourteenth Legislature expanded Gregg County southward by adding a portion to it from northern Rusk County.¹¹

By 1873, Texas and Pacific Railroad had taken over Southern Pacific Railroad and resumed construction of the railroad to the west from Longview.¹² Again, the railroad company circumvented known settlements. The farming village of Awalt—one of the oldest communities in Gregg County, founded in the late 1840s and named after the first minister of the Pine Tree Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Solomon Awalt—occupied the vicinity where the railroad wished to establish the next stop westward of Longview. The geographic centrality of Awalt within the county had made it a contender against Longview for the seat of government when Gregg County was formed.¹³ However, the Texas and Pacific Railroad platted the new industrial townsite of Willow Springs (Figure 4) as a water stop along the Marshall-Tyler Road, about three miles west of Longview, instead of laying their tracks through Awalt.¹⁴ Land for Willow Spring's townsite was leased to the Texas and Pacific Railroad Company by the George H. Jones estate (Figure 9).¹⁵ The Jones family were longtime farmers in the area, according to United States Federal Census records. Most Awalt residents relocated to Willow Springs, and by 1900, Awalt had become abandoned and disappeared from maps. Gladewater emerged as another new community built along the Marshall-Tyler Road to serve the railroad, situated about 10 miles west of Willow Springs (Figure 10).

Willow Springs continued as a small farming community for over a half-century after its founding. A change in ownership took place in the 1910s—the Jones family conveyed the tract containing Willow Springs to Bun E. Rodden, a descendant of Gregg County early settlers, in 1912—but the area remained a homestead and farmland.¹⁶

Highway Development Lays the Foundation for Future Growth

In the 1920s, Greggton and Longview were stops on the Dixie Overland Highway (now US Highway 80), which stretched all the way from Savannah, Georgia, to San Diego, California (Figure 3).¹⁷ The stretch of West Marshall Avenue that defines the southern boundary of the historic district today travels along the same alignment as the historic Dixie Overland Highway and US Highway 80. The Dixie Overland Highway was one of over 250 trails intersecting the country, and by 1925, State highway agencies clamored for a simpler, more unified road system. Finally, in

⁸ Eugene W. McWhorter, "Longview, TX (Gregg County)," *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed June 12, 2023, <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/longview-tx-gregg-county>.

⁹ McWhorter, "Longview, TX (Gregg County)."

¹⁰ Suzanne Perry, "Gregg County," *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed June 12, 2023, <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/gregg-county>.

¹¹ Perry, "Gregg County."

¹² Valenzuela and Porterfield, E-7.

¹³ "June 1873 Vote Sealed Awalt's Fate," *Longview News-Journal*, June 30, 2013, www.newspapers.com

¹⁴ Christopher Long, "Awalt, TX," *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed June 15, 2023, <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/awalt-tx>.

¹⁵ Gregg County Clerk Records, Lease Agreement, George H. Jones heirs (Lessors) and Texas Pacific Railway (Lessee), February 13, 1931.

¹⁶ Gregg County Clerk Records, Deed, G.H. Jones to Bunn E. Rodden, May 1, 1912.

¹⁷ Richard F. Weingroff, "U.S. Route 80 The Dixie Overland Highway," Federal Highway Administration, June 27, 2017, accessed June 22, 2023, <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure/U.S.80.cfm>

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November 1926, the American Association of State Highway Officials (AASHO) chose to adopt the US numbered highway system. According to the Federal Highway Administration:

The first official description of the approved U.S. 80 appeared in the U.S. numbered log that AASHO printed in April 1927: United States Highway No. 80. Total Mileage, 2,726...[in] **Texas:** Beginning at the Louisiana-Texas State line east of Waskom via Marshall, Longview, Mineola, Dallas, Fort Worth, Eastland, Abilene, Big Spring, Pecos, San Martine, Van Horn, El Paso to the Texas-New Mexico State line south of Anthony.¹⁸

Despite its location on this highway, Willow Springs saw little of the commercial development typically associated with the highway elsewhere in the 1910s and 1920s. During the 1920s, the community's population was less than 200, and commercial development was limited to "one small store."¹⁹ Most development in the region at the time centered around Longview.

The Oil Boom Prompts a New Town Name and Commercial Growth

While much of the country suffered economically during the Great Depression, Gregg County entered a period of prosperity and growth. Oil fever hit the area in 1930 after a driller discovered oil in neighboring Rusk County. Subsequent discoveries of wells in Gregg, Upshur, Smith, and Cherokee counties—together known as the East Texas Oilfield (Figure 11)—brought in more people, money, and development. The impact was felt across Gregg County, including in small railroad and farming communities such as Willow Springs. Due to its location on the railroad and its lack of development, the community was strategically positioned for growth because of its availability of land and relative affordability compared to larger cities like Longview.

Seizing upon the town's ample land, the Texas and Pacific Railroad built a rail switch and spur tracks from its main line into southeast Willow Springs in the early 1930s. Along the line, oil supply companies erected warehouses, shops, loading racks, and offices. By 1931, several of the country's largest oil field supply and tool companies were represented in Willow Springs, including the Continental Supply Company, the Oil Well Supply Company, Hercules Supply Company, Atlas Supply Company, and the Frick Reid Supply Company.²⁰ Preparing many of the materials, tools, and supply houses used in the oil fields, Willow Springs emerged as the "recognized supply center for the East Texas oil field."²¹ In turn, major oil companies also built offices and warehouses in the community, including Magnolia Petroleum, Gulf Oil, and Stanolind Oil, making Willow Springs "the fastest growing industrial area" in East Texas.²²

Extensive commercial development along US Highway 80 from Longview to Gladewater ensued, mirroring the activity in Willow Springs. An excerpt from a 1931 newspaper article from *The Longview Daily News* aptly describes the growth along what became known as the Longview-Gladewater Highway:

Between Longview and Gladewater there is a 14-mile stretch of what used to be just highway road. Today the same stretch of highway is bounded almost continuously by places of business, dwellings, and roaring rigs. So

¹⁸ Weingroff, "U.S. Route 80 The Dixie Overland Highway."

¹⁹ "Greggton's History," *Longview News-Journal*, July 7, 2009, www.newspapers.com; Christopher Long, "Greggton, TX," *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed June 15, 2023, <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/greggton-tx>; Preservation Central, Inc., "Historic Resource Survey Report Phase I: Downtown Core, Longview, Gregg County, Texas," prepared for the City of Longview and the Texas Historical Commission, September 2016, 42.

²⁰ "Highway to Gladewater Becoming 'Main Street' of Oil Fields as Activity Pounds on Unceasingly," *Longview Daily News*, April 12, 1931, www.newspapers.com.

²¹ "Greggton Has High Rank As Industrial City," *Longview Daily News*, September 17, 1933, www.newspapers.com.

²² "Tucker to Build Hotel," *Longview Daily News*, May 7, 1931, www.newspapers.com.

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thickly settled a stretch, so densely populated, and so heavily traveled is it, that it has justly come to be called “The Main Street of Texas.”²³

The newspaper article identified Willow Springs as the “backbone” of the commercial corridor where “formerly there were only pastures and forests” (Figure 12). Despite so much growth in the area, Willow Springs still lacked telephone service, a water system, sewage, and a post office in the early 1930s.²⁴ Mail intended for Willow Springs had to circulate through the Longview post office.²⁵ However, residents established Greggton Power & Light Company in February 1933.²⁶

The influx of oil-related companies in Willow Springs increased the town’s population and resulted in subsequent residential and commercial development. The town’s proximity to the oil fields brought in throngs of workers looking for residency in the area. In response to the growing population, which had reached 1,500 by the early 1930s, the town applied for a post office. Because another city in Texas—in Fayette County—shared the name Willow Springs, causing confusion, the town was renamed Greggton when its first post office opened in 1933.²⁷ With industrial development centered in southeast Greggton, new residential subdivisions emerged in northeast, northwest, and southwest Greggton.²⁸ Churches and at least one school also opened in other areas of town. According to the 1955 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (Figure 2), a Black neighborhood bordered the vicinity just north of the Greggton Historic District, along Pine Tree Road. Along this road and in the neighborhoods to the east and west were a “colored” elementary school, Hughes Chapel C. M. E. Church, and another “colored” church. Commercial development, meanwhile, was concentrated along US Highway 80 – especially along the segment today known as West Marshall Avenue.²⁹

Greggton’s First Business District

New stores, restaurants, theaters, lodging facilities, and automobile service stations began to appear in Willow Springs as soon as the East Texas wells began gushing. Newspaper articles from the early 1930s reported on the opening of these various establishments, and, by 1936, Greggton boasted 125 businesses (some of them industrial).³⁰ Historic maps confirm that free-standing masonry buildings characterized most commercial development along the West Marshall Avenue segment of US Highway 80 (Figure 2). The area around the Greggton Historic District stands as an exception to this pattern. By the 1930s, the planning patterns along this block clearly marked it as the core of downtown Greggton – the only block with dense commercial buildings emulating the appearance of more substantial American downtowns. At the time, both the north and south sides of this block featured dense commercial development, but only the north side remains intact today. Within the present-day north side of the 3700 block of West Marshall Avenue, a series of contiguous masonry one- and two-part commercial block buildings were erected in the 1930s to house various businesses serving the growing population of Greggton during the oil boom years. This strip of buildings became the town’s first business center, where patrons could secure their everyday needs and access services, frequenting businesses such as pharmacies, restaurants, grocery stores, automobile servicing, and more.

The edifice previously situated at 3705-3707 West Marshall Avenue, or Lot 10, was the first known building constructed in the Greggton Historic District (no longer extant). It housed Hamvasy Drug Store No. 2, one of the

²³ “Willow Springs Area is Center of Supply for Gregg Oil Field,” *The Longview Daily News*, September 13, 1931, www.newspapers.com.

²⁴ “Greggton, Now Post Office City, Has Real Chance for Future Growth in Business,” *Longview News Journal*, February 21, 1933, www.newspapers.com.

²⁵ “Greggton, Now Post Office City, Has Real Chance for Future Growth in Business.”

²⁶ “Lighting Plant at Greggton is Showing Gains,” *The Longview Daily News*, September 17, 1933, www.newspapers.com.

²⁷ “Greggton Now Post Office in Longview Area,” *Longview News Journal*, February 7, 1933, www.newspapers.com.

²⁸ Aerial views of Greggton from the 1940s reveal developmental patterns, <https://www.historicaerials.com/>.

²⁹ “Highway to Gladewater Becoming ‘Main Street’ of Oil Fields as Activity Pounds on Unceasingly,” *Longview Daily News*, April 12, 1931, www.newspapers.com.

³⁰ Christopher Long, “Greggton, TX.”

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earliest permanent businesses in Willow Springs, opened by Richard L. Hall on March 1, 1931.³¹ Hall, a graduate of the Baylor School of Pharmacy, started his career working in the Texas Panhandle and West Texas. He eventually moved to Longview and opened a drug store, presumably Hamvasy Drug Store No. 1, on South Fredonia Street.³² Hall built both the Longview and Willow Springs drug stores himself. His Willow Springs business included a modern soda fountain and a full inventory of drugs. Hall managed the establishment, while Dennis Wren, Edwin Bronson, and Dick Weaver served as his employees.³³ Another one-part commercial block edifice (Resource 7) replaced the Hamvasy Drug Store No. 2 building in 1955.

Seminole Service Station, occupying 3701 West Marshall Avenue (Resource 8), or Lot 11, is another early business. J.E. “Jimmy” Mauldin opened the service station immediately to the east of Hamvasy Drug Store No. 2 (Resource 7) by September 1931.³⁴ Mauldin had formerly operated service stations in Seminole and Oklahoma City. He and his business partner J.C. Gillham, from Oklahoma, established Seminole Service Station along the Longview-Gladewater Highway as an authorized Texaco dealer. Their employees included “Heavy” Ready and Ross Mauldin. Besides dealing Texaco products, Seminole Service Station offered the following services: “neating” windshields, cleaning floorboards, furnishing battery water, and doing vulcanizing.³⁵ The service station sits opposite another filling station across Pine Street; it was constructed by 1955, according to the Sanborn map. Comparison of the two gas stations highlights Resource 8’s unique polygonal-shaped building form, echoing the angles of Block 12’s eastern curbing; the station on the east side of Pine Street features the more common oblong-shaped building form. The emergence of two stations at the same intersection indicates the high volume of motorists requiring fuel or servicing in the area.

In January 1933, C.E. Chaffin opened a new grocery store, Big Grocery No. 1 (Figure 7), at 3717 West Marshall Avenue (Resource 4). Chaffin had owned and operated Model Grocery and Market on West Tyler Street in Longview since 1931. According to a 1937 *Longview Daily News* article, Chaffin constructed the building for the new store in Greggton himself.³⁶ He recruited employees from his Longview store, Lee Craig and Clarence Willingham, to work at the Greggton establishment. Chaffin came from humble roots in Paris, Texas, and displayed ambition and tenacity from a young age. He experienced early success in the mercantile industry by utilizing newspaper advertising to promote his businesses.³⁷ Opening his first store, Model Grocery, in Longview in 1931, he had five stores in operation within six years.³⁸ By 1937, he was the largest independent grocer operating in East Texas. Chaffin remodeled Big Grocery No. 1 in the spring of 1939, making the store 15 feet longer at the rear, adding new interior flooring, and installing new equipment.³⁹ He also built a new warehouse adjacent to the grocery store, to the east, in Lot 8 (3713 West Marshall Avenue, Resource 5). The warehouse included a feed store and offices.⁴⁰ Chaffin later ran Chaffin Five and Dime Store from his shop.

Within a month after Chaffin opened Big Grocery No. 1, the Rodden Building—named in honor of the land’s previous use as the Rodden family homestead—was erected to house Greggton’s first post office. Located at 3725 West Marshall Avenue (Resource 1), in Lot 4, the Rodden Building is the westernmost property and the only two-story edifice in the historic district. A one-story brick building (not extant) in the adjacent lot to the west (present-day 3727 West Marshall Avenue) served as the temporary site of the post office prior to the construction of the Rodden Building in February 1933. Richard L. Hall, owner of Hamvasy Drug Store No. 2, became the first postmaster of Greggton and

³¹ “Willow Springs Area is Center of Supply for Gregg Oil Field.”

³² “Growth of Willow Springs Marked by Opening of First Drug Store, with Longview Man as Its Owner,” *Longview News Journal*, May 5, 1931, www.newspapers.com.

³³ “Willow Springs Area is Center of Supply for Gregg Oil Field.”

³⁴ “Willow Springs Area is Center of Supply for Gregg Oil Field.”

³⁵ “Willow Springs Area is Center of Supply for Gregg Oil Field.”

³⁶ “His Open Sesame,” *Longview Daily News*, June 22, 1937, www.newspapers.com

³⁷ “His Open Sesame.”

³⁸ “Complete Remodeling of Big Grocery No. 1 in Greggton,” *The Longview Daily News*, May 21, 1939, www.newspapers.com.

³⁹ “Complete Remodeling of Big Grocery No. 1 in Greggton.”

⁴⁰ “Complete Remodeling of Big Grocery No. 1 in Greggton.”

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is credited for the change in the town's name from Willow Springs to Greggton.⁴¹ In addition to the post office, Hall-Wren Pharmacy also occupied the Rodden Building.⁴² Richard L. Hall and L.D. Wren ran the pharmacy. L.D. Wren, a native of Breckenridge, Texas, moved to Greggton after completing his degree at Texas Tech University in Lubbock.⁴³ Hall died in December 1935, and Wren took over as sole proprietor of Wren's Pharmacy. When the Rodden Building could no longer accommodate the space needed for the post office and pharmacy in 1950, the post office moved to a new building outside the historic district, and Wren's Pharmacy took up the entire lower story of the Rodden Building.⁴⁴ Wren's Pharmacy offered medical supplies, such as prescriptions, biologicals, elastic goods, and veterinary supplies. L.D. Wren owned another drug store in Greggton located south of West Marshall Avenue, which he opened in 1949.⁴⁵ Dr. A.B. Garvey started a dentistry practice out of the second story of the Rodden Building in 1953 after he returned from active duty with the United States Air Force.⁴⁶ In 1956, L.D. Wren sold the property and pharmacy business to James Cammack, another druggist, and Cammack Pharmacy took over the ground floor of the building.⁴⁷ James Cammack graduated from the University of Texas and worked at a drugstore in Carthage, Texas, his hometown, before moving to Greggton. He had the building completely remodeled before opening his business there.⁴⁸ Cammack's offerings included: a complete prescription department, a soda fountain, cosmetics, sundries, small electrical appliances, toys, baby supplies, and camera equipment.

Based on listings in the 1936 Greggton City Directory, other businesses operating in the Greggton Historic District included: Daniel's Café, Greggton Recreation Club, Quality Shoe Shop, Cope's Café, Williams Cleaners, Covington Barber Shop, and Supply Café.⁴⁹ Concurrently, on the south side of West Marshall Avenue, outside the district boundaries, an oil supply company occupied the western end of the block, and stores operated out of free-standing wood-frame and concrete block buildings.⁵⁰

Growth in Greggton Sustains throughout World War II and the Postwar Era

Though the oil boom began to slow during the late 1930s, the East Texas Oilfield remained active and prosperous into the 1940s and 1950s, playing a large role in the supply of oil during World War II. Greggton continued to expand and enjoy prosperity. The town witnessed further industrial growth with the construction of new complexes such as the LeBus Rotary Tool plant on the southwestern edge of town and a new Texas and Pacific Railroad depot at the intersection of the tracks and Supply Street, both built in 1954.⁵¹ Greggton also welcomed new industries and companies, including Duncan Mattress, which also built a facility on West Marshall Avenue in 1954. Residentially, construction kept pace with the expanding industry and population, and in 1947, Greggton added over 300 new homes.⁵² New churches also emerged, and just north of the Greggton Historic District, a new fire station and water department offices were constructed in 1949. These improvements were made possible by the Gregg County Commissioners Court since Greggton remained unincorporated as a city.⁵³ Southwestern Gas & Electric Company

⁴¹ "Greggton Now Post Office in Longview Area," *Longview News Journal*, February 7, 1933, www.newspapers.com; "Postmaster of Greggton Dies," *The Longview Daily News*, December 2, 1935, www.newspapers.com.

⁴² "Hall-Wren Drug Store Owned by Experienced Men," *The Longview Daily Times*, September 17, 1933.

⁴³ "L.D. Wren to Observe 14th Year in Business," *The Longview Daily News*, February 13, 1947, www.newspapers.com.

⁴⁴ "Home of 125 Oil Businesses," *Longview News Journal*, July 30, 1950, www.newspapers.com.

⁴⁵ "L.D. Wren Buys Ritz and Will Operate Two Stores," *Longview News Journal*, June 26, 1949, www.newspapers.com.

⁴⁶ "Dr. A.B. Garvey," *Longview News-Journal*, June 19, 1953, www.newspapers.com.

⁴⁷ "Wren Pharmacy Sold to James Cammack," *The Longview Daily News*, June 7, 1956, www.newspapers.com.

⁴⁸ "Open House Set at Camack's," *The Longview Daily News*, July 25, 1956, www.newspapers.com.

⁴⁹ Ancestry.com. *U.S., City Directories, 1822-1995* [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.

⁵⁰ "Big Grocery One of Finest in Greggton," *The Longview Daily News*, July 30, 1950, www.newspapers.com.

⁵¹ "Greggton's Role in Etext Industry," *Longview News Journal*, January 1, 1955, www.newspapers.com.

⁵² "Over 300 Homes Are Erected in Greggton Area During Past Year," *Longview Daily News*, December 14, 1947, www.newspapers.com.

⁵³ "Expansion of Oil Field Supply Industry Booms Greggton's Growth," *The Longview Daily News*, December 5, 1947, www.newspapers.com.

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furnished power to Greggtonians, and a new \$500,000 water control district was underway. By the 1950s, Greggton's population rose to approximately 8,500.⁵⁴ The Greggton Chamber of Commerce was formed in 1951.

Consistent with the city's industrial and residential growth, commerce also expanded in Greggton. Throughout this period, the historic district remained the core of Greggton's downtown. Building patterns established during the 1930s continued throughout the 1940s and 1950s, with free-standing buildings, including several motels, infilling vacant land along West Marshall Avenue east and west of the Greggton Historic District (Figure 2). Southeast of the district, at the southeast intersection of West Marshall Avenue and Pine Tree Road, a new complex referred to as the Greggton Business Center, comprised of a block of 11 masonry buildings (most no longer extant), opened in 1947.⁵⁵ The Greggton Business Center included the "ultra-modern" Village Theater, Greggton Furniture Company, and a new First State Bank of Greggton building, among other establishments, including subsequent businesses opened by proprietors within the Greggton Historic District. Multiple newspaper articles from this period tout Greggton's "million dollar building boom" and the myriad new property types. The Greggton Business Center did not pull patrons away from the businesses composing the Greggton Historic District; rather, it provided larger spaces for products and services not possible in the district's smaller one-part and two-part commercial block buildings. The original business hub continued to thrive, as it provided essential goods and services to the residents of Greggton (Figures 6-8). Moreover, the downtown briefly expanded with the construction of the new Greggton Business Center, but the buildings within the historic district represent the only grouping of intact commercial edifices in the downtown area that survive today (Photo 1).

The land in and surrounding the Greggton Historic District was replatted in 1948. Named the North Division of Greggton, the subdivision, which stretched two blocks north and several blocks east and west of the district (Figure 4), included a restrictive covenant prohibiting African Americans from owning land. Keeping with the spatial patterns established by the original 1873 plat, developments in the district included the construction of a new building (Resource 7) around 1955, filling the then-vacant lot (Lot 10) between the gas station (Resource 8) and the building at 3709-3711 West Marshall Avenue (Resource 6). Big Grocery No. 1 at 3717 West Marshall Avenue (Resource 4) was relocated to the Greggton Business Center to have sufficient room to accommodate the growing population of Greggton. Another grocery business, Wilson Grocery, occupied the building by 1957.⁵⁶ The block also lost its westernmost building when the one-story brick building at 3727 West Marshall Avenue (outside the district boundaries) was demolished between 1947 and 1955.⁵⁷ The lot remained vacant throughout the remainder of the historic period.

In 1959, Greggton became part of the City of Longview via a large-scale annexation effort – Longview's first annexation since 1904.⁵⁸ Following annexation, commercial and residential growth from Longview expanded into Greggton, which supported the local economy. Meanwhile, Gladewater no longer served as a major oil drilling location due to depleted supply, so travel along the Longview-Gladewater segment of US Highway 80 likely tapered by the early 1960s.⁵⁹ Construction of the interstate highway system commenced in the 1950s. With I-20 traversing Gregg County by the mid-1960s, it supplanted West Marshall Avenue/US Highway 80 as the region's major east-west artery. State Highway Loop 281, also planned during the 1960s, encircled Longview to serve the growing commuter traffic in the city's outskirts. These major circulation routes attracted retail and discount stores, restaurants, and hotels, and eventually a large shopping mall to Longview's northern and western sections of town.⁶⁰ Throughout the historic period, the supply and tool companies maintained their presence in Greggton, which in turn supported sustained yet

⁵⁴ *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Greggton, Gregg County, Texas*. Sanborn Map Company, 1955. Map.

https://www.loc.gov/item/sanborn08559_001/.

⁵⁵ "Greggton Enjoying Greatest Building Boom in Etex," *The Longview Daily News*, December 5, 1947, www.newspapers.com.

⁵⁶ Ancestry.com. *U.S., City Directories*.

⁵⁷ The building, shown in a 1947 historic photo, does not appear on the 1955 Sanborn or a 1957 aerial image.

⁵⁸ "Greggton History."

⁵⁹ Valenzuela and Porterfield, E-13.

⁶⁰ Preservation Central, Inc., 42.

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waning commerce. Even though new commercial development along I-20 and State Highway Loop 281 drew business away from the Greggton Historic District, newspaper articles from the 1970s reveal that some stores remained open.

Shuttering and Demolition During the Modern Era

Since the end of the historic period, development in the Greggton area steadily declined. The suburbanization of Longview resulted in the shuttering and demolition of commercial buildings constructed during the oil boom years. In the district, even though some businesses shuttered, a new building was constructed in the 1980s. A one-story brick building was constructed at 3727 West Marshall Avenue (cut out of the district boundaries because it is not historic-age). The new building occupied the lot that had remained vacant since the 1950s. South of the Greggton Historic District, most of the historic industrial and commercial buildings, including the Greggton Business Center, were demolished and replaced with new buildings (outside of the district boundary). Recently, a developer from Longview purchased the building at 3717 West Marshall Avenue (Resource 4), and they plan to rehabilitate the property. Streetview imagery per Google reveals that most of the buildings in the district have been vacant since at least 2008; however, they maintain sufficient integrity to provide a tangible link to the past. The resources in the historic district serve as the community's most cohesive and intact representation of the original plat for Willow Springs and Greggton's early prosperity.

Criterion C

The buildings in the historic district derive additional significance from associations with popular commercial architectural trends from the early to mid-twentieth century, the period when Greggton thrived as an industrial supply center. Therefore, the district is eligible under Criterion C for Architecture at the local level.

Area of Significance: Architecture

The buildings embody popular forms and architectural styles reflective of regional, state, and national trends during the 1930s through the mid-century period. The grouping's cohesive appearance, unified scale and materials, as well as distinct character-defining features stand out among the extant historic commercial buildings in Greggton, making them the best-surviving examples of the community's early commercial edifices.

The inauguration of rail service in the 1870s served not only as the impetus for the founding and growth of Willow Springs, but also provided a means through which local residents became exposed to new people, materials, technologies, and ways of thinking. Similarly, as a major supply center in East Texas during the oil boom years, connections to other parts of the state and country formed, facilitating a greater flow and exchange of ideas, including those related to architecture. The styles and forms of the historic district reflect popular trends prevalent in other prosperous towns across Texas and the United States. As the population and economy of Greggton increased during the 1930s through the 1950s, styles and forms of the buildings embodied mainstream tastes seen elsewhere, reflecting the cross-pollination of architectural modes. While none of the buildings in the historic district were designed by known professional architects, the architecture reveals that the builders who constructed them possessed awareness and know-how of trends and techniques popular outside of Greggton.

As described in Section 7, the historic district contains six one-part commercial block buildings, one two-part commercial block building, and one polygonal box with a canopy building. These reflect common building forms of stores and gas stations typically found in downtown areas across the state and country. The building forms express the functional needs of the respective commercial properties: retail establishments, restaurants, and pharmacies required inviting storefronts, and gas stations required easy curbside access and shelter for servicing of vehicles. The Greggton Historic District presents a grouping of building forms distinct from the mostly oblong box and box forms that populated the Greggton streetscape during the historic period as well as from those standing today.

In terms of stylistic influences, four of the district's resources display the American Commercial style, which characterized a large amount of the commercial buildings erected across the county during the early twentieth century.

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These buildings feature a simple appearance with brick construction, minimal ornamentation, and parapets with flat cornices and pilasters between bays. Resources 2 (Photo 8), 3 (Photo 9), 6 (Photo 12), and 7 (Photo 14) represent the buildings in the Greggton Historic District embodying the American Commercial style. They also serve as the most intact examples of the American Commercial style in Greggton. Another three buildings within the district exemplify the Art Deco style. Resources 1 (Photo 6), 4 (Photo 10), and 5 (Photo 11) constitute the Art Deco buildings within the historic district, with Resource 1 being the most ornate example. Likewise, these resources represent the most intact and distinct Art Deco buildings in Greggton.

The East Texas oil boom coincided with the rising popularity of the Art Deco architectural style in the region and across the nation. The style took hold in the United States during the 1920s and 1930s as a reaction against historicism favored in previous decades, yet the inclusion of elements such as classical columns and symmetrical configurations suggests the style had a transitional role in bridging historic revivals and modernism.⁶¹ Attributes of Art Deco designs include engaged columns and pilasters, emphasis on verticality, and geometric ornamentation featuring a range of motifs, such as zigzags, chevrons, sunbursts, and stylized foliage and animal forms. **(Photo 7)**

While Resource 8 was constructed concurrently with the American Commercial and Art Deco style edifices in the historic district, the 1950s era storefront replacement gives it a Modernist appearance – a style popularized by automobile culture in the United States during the mid-twentieth century. The service station's ribbon windows and upward-slanted canopy (Photo 15), hallmarks of the modern movement, emphasized horizontality and provided eye-catching elements to motorists traveling along West Marshall Avenue or Pine Tree Road in Greggton. Resource 8's polygonal building form, prominent canopy, and spatial relationship to the adjacent commercial block resources constitute unique character-defining features compared to other modernist Greggton edifices.

Conclusion

The Greggton Commercial Historic District encompasses buildings erected in the commercial center of Greggton from the early 1930s to the mid-twentieth century. This cohesive grouping provides the best extant examples of historic architecture dating to the town's period of commercial prosperity and developmental growth resulting from its status as an important industrial supply center for the East Texas Oilfield. The buildings in the historic district embody popular forms and architectural styles—the most distinct and intact in Greggton—reflective of broad design trends. The Greggton Historic District resources possess sufficient integrity to present a tangible link to the period when Greggton transitioned from a quiet farming community to an important industrial supply center in the region. The Greggton Historic Commercial District is nominated under Criterion A in the areas of Community Planning and Development and Commerce and under Criterion C in the area of Architecture, at the local level of significance for the period 1930 to 1959. The period of significance represents the date of the oldest resource and the year Longview annexed Greggton and the commercial district began to decline.

⁶¹ Diane E. Williams, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Tyler, Texas," National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Listing, Texas Historical Commission, July 3, 2001.

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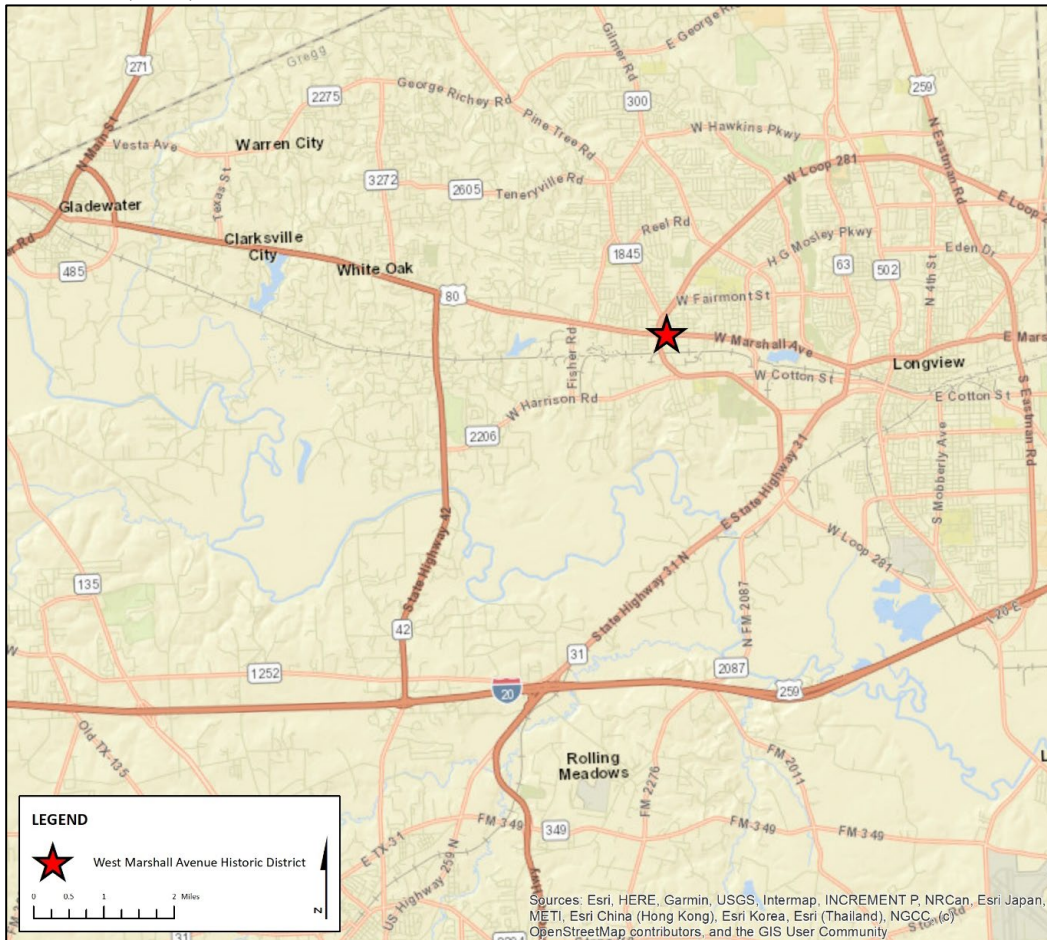
Greggton Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Maps

Map 1. County map of Texas with Gregg County highlighted.



Map 2. Current USGS topographic map showing Greggton. This particular segment of US Highway 80 became known as the “Longview-Gladewater Highway” during the oil boom years; today a segment of this highway is known as West Marshall Avenue. The location of the Greggton Historic District is identified by a red star. Source: HHM & Associates, Inc., 2023.



Greggton Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Map 3. Sketch of boundary for Greggton Historic District. Source: Google Earth

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 32.507730° | Longitude: -94.795437° |
| 2. Latitude: 32.507705° | Longitude: -94.794731° |
| 3. Latitude: 32.507244° | Longitude: -94.794441° |
| 4. Latitude: 32.507304° | Longitude: -94.795466° |



Greggton Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Map 4. The nominated boundary encompasses LT 4-11 BLK 12 (NCB 3403) NORTH DIVISION (Property ID#56269-56276) as recorded by the Gregg County Central Appraisal District. Source: Gregg County CAD.



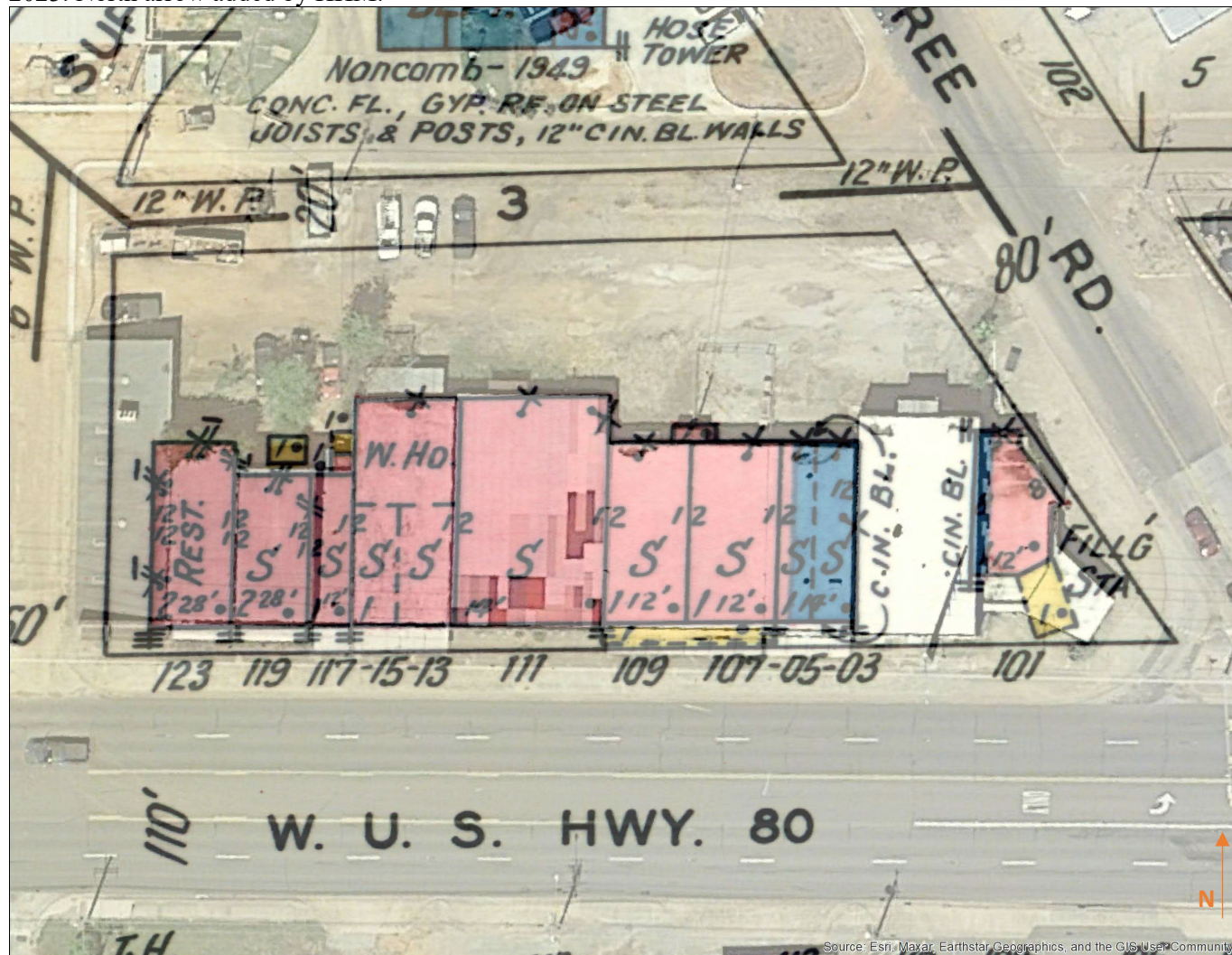
Greggton Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Map 5. Map showing that all buildings within the Greggton Historic District are contributing resources. Source: HHM & Associates, Inc., 2023.



Greggton Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

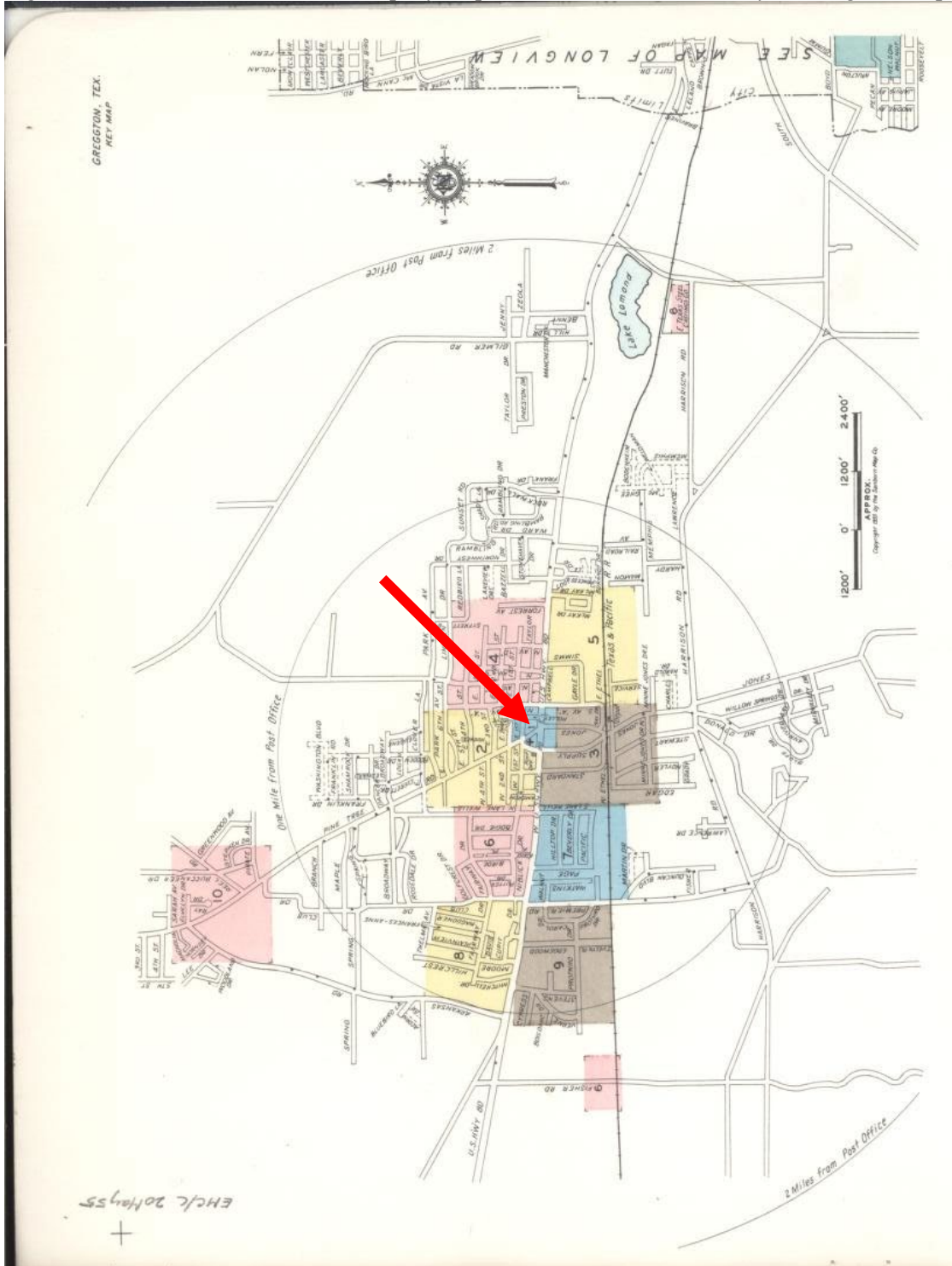
Map 6. Overlay of current aerial photograph and Sheet 1 of the 1955 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of Greggton showing the Greggton Historic District. Sources: Library of Congress Map Collection and HHM & Associates, Inc., 2023. North arrow added by HHM.



Greggton Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

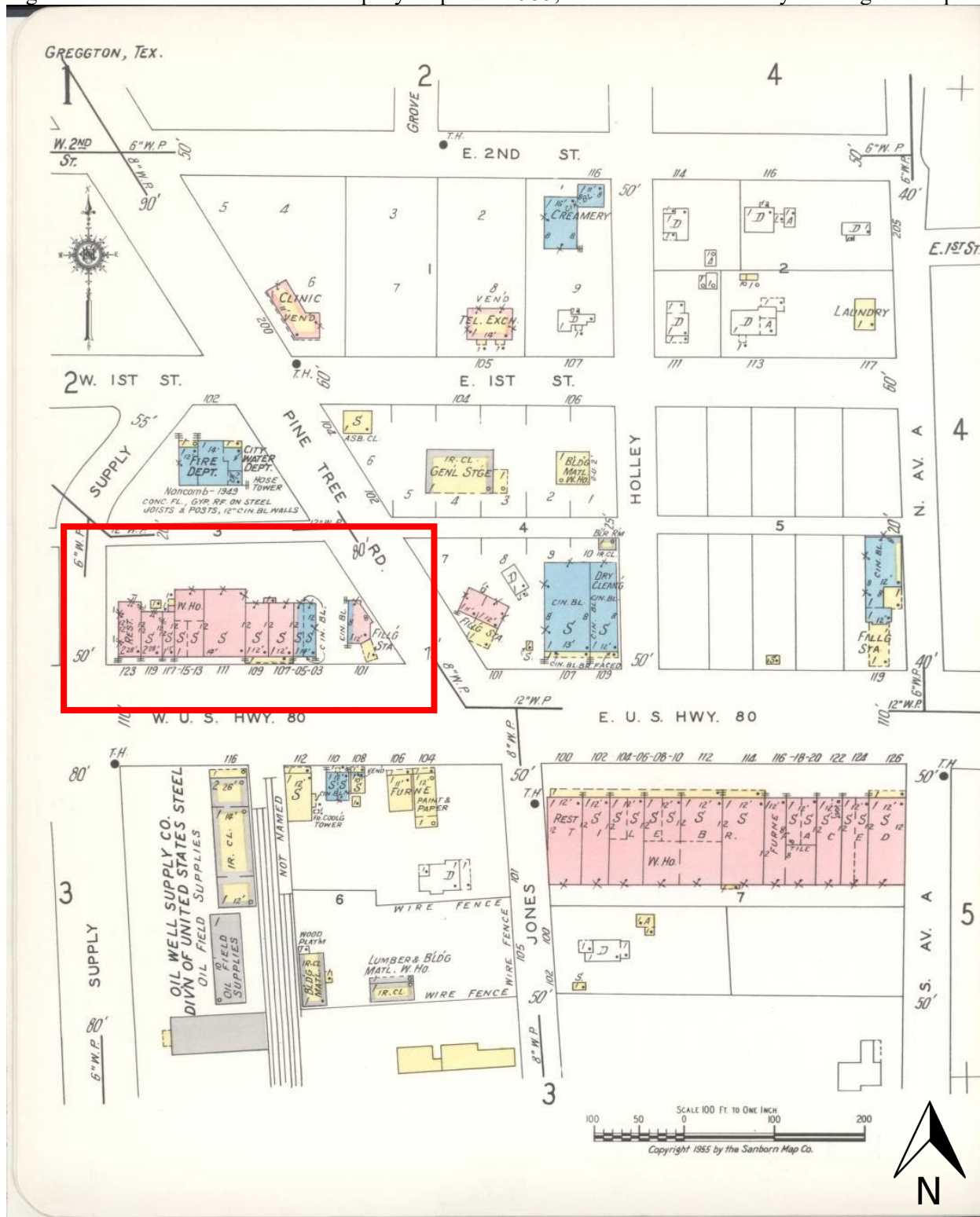
Figures

Figure 1. Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map from 1955. Source: Library of Congress Map Collection.



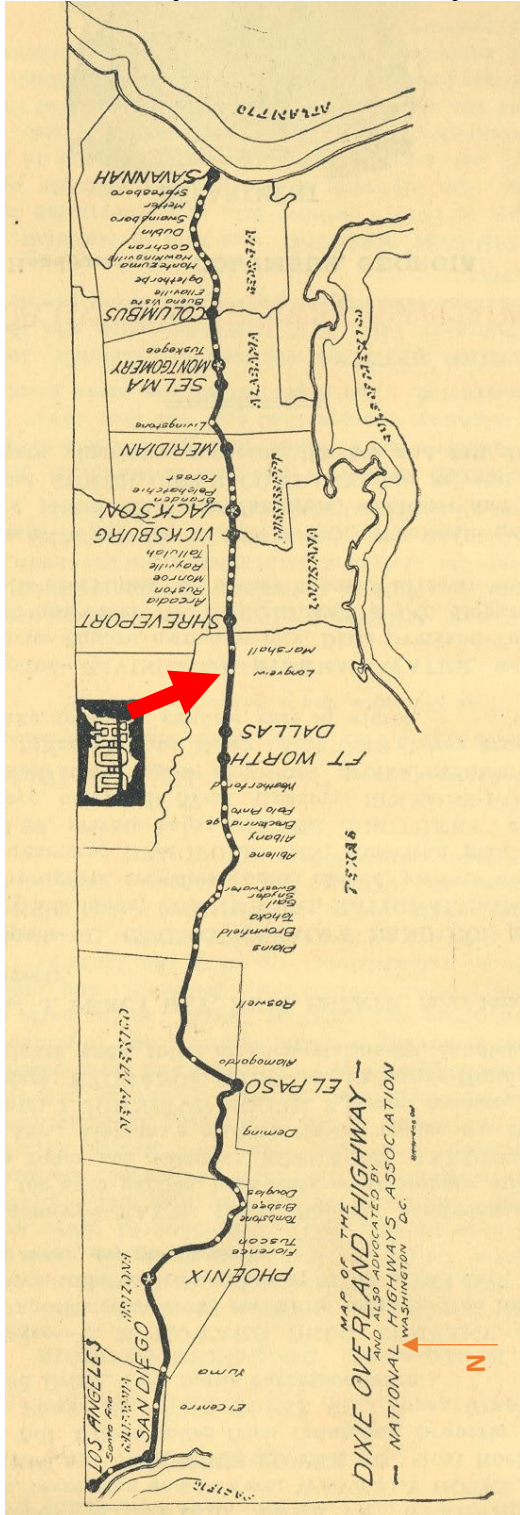
Greggton Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Figure 2. Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map from 1955, Sheet 1. Source: Library of Congress Map Collection.



Greggton Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Figure 3. Map of the Dixie Overland Highway (now US Highway 80, part of which is now also known as West Marshall Avenue), showing the route through Longview, circa 1920. Source: Federal Highway Administration. North arrow added by HHM. The red arrow points to Longview.



Greggton Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Figure 4. Original town plat of Willow Springs, Texas, dating to 1873. Source: Gregg County Clerk.

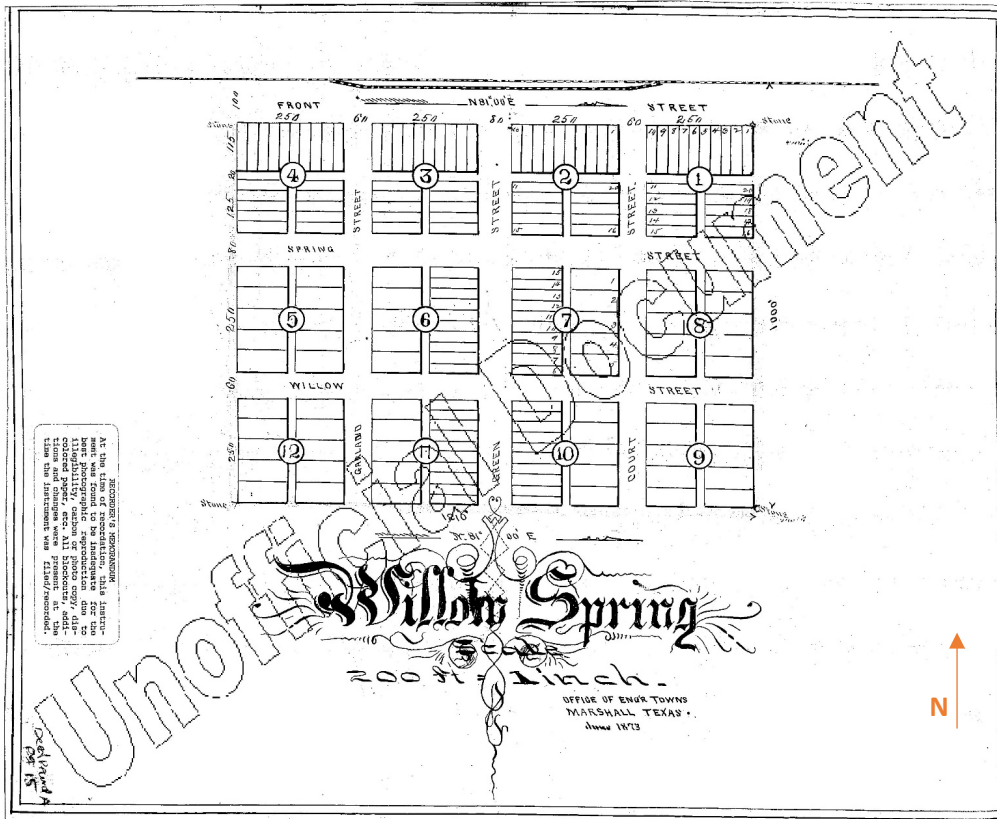
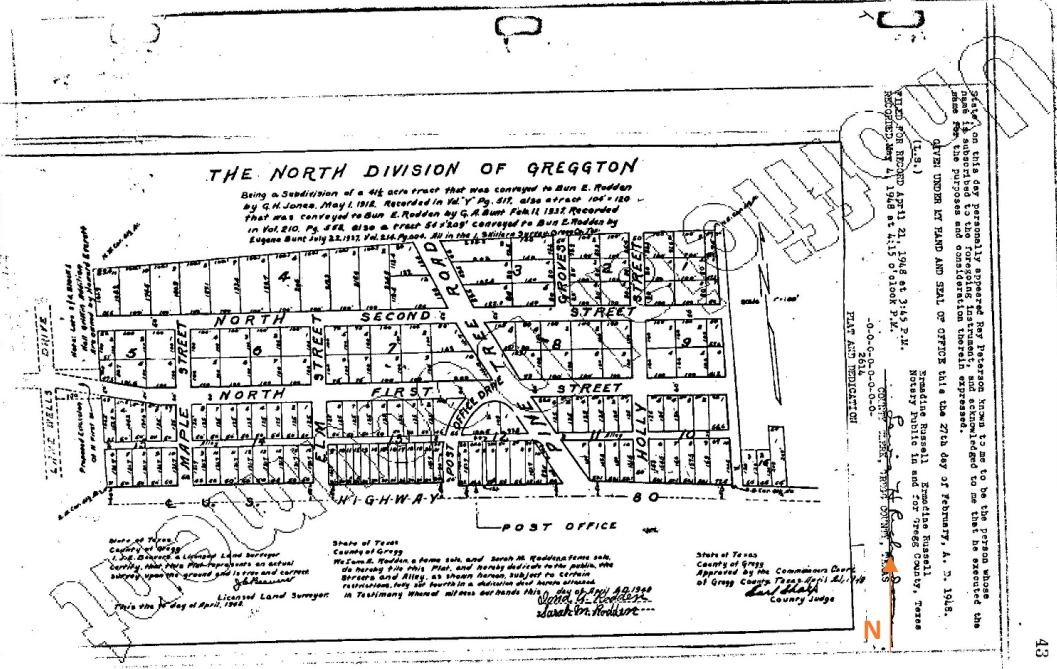


Figure 5. Plat map of the North Division of Greggton, Texas, dating to 1948. Source: Gregg County Clerk.



Greggton Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Figure 6. Photograph appearing in *The Longview Daily News* in 1947 showing the Greggton Historic District. Source: *The Longview Daily News*, via www.newspapers.com.



Above photograph shows the north side of the Greggton shopping district. These modern up-to-date businesses are the hub of the trade section of Greggton. All stores are completely stocked with merchandise, for all people in the Greggton area. Plenty of free parking space to make your shopping easier.

Greggton Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Figure 7. Photograph showing the Big Grocery No. 1 Building (Resource 4) in Greggton during the 1930s. Source: *The Longview Daily News*, via www.newspapers.com.



(Photo by Claxton)

Big Grocery No. 1, first of the chain started by C. E. Chaffin, was established in 1933. This store has eight employes. Clarence Willingham is manager.

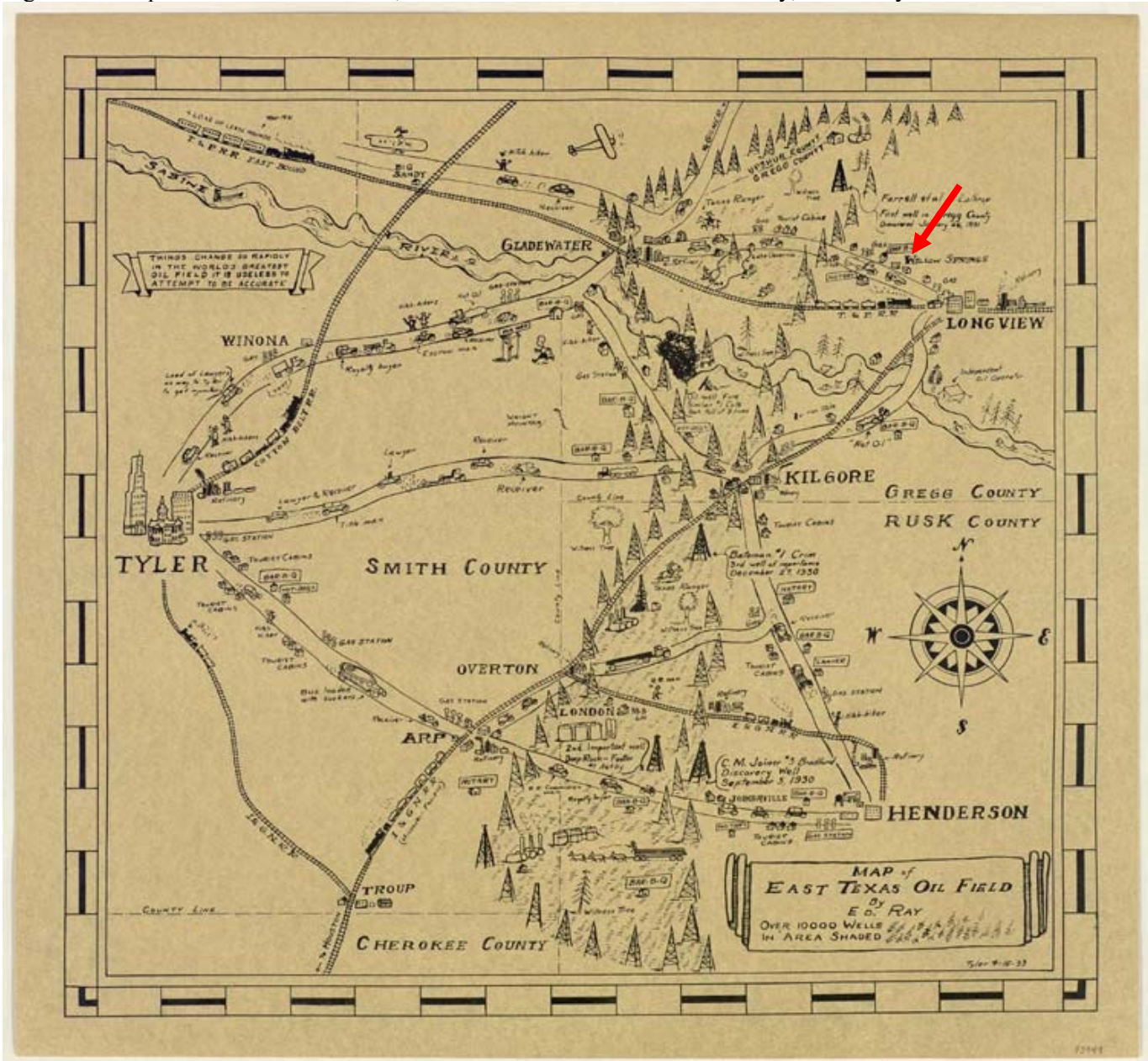
Greggton Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Figure 8. Postcard showing the Greggton Historic District in 1947. Source: "Longview Pictures & Postcards - Street Scenes," TxGen Web Project, <https://www.txgenwebcounties.org/gregg/PhotoAlbum/PictureIndexLongviewStreets.html>.



Greggton Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Figure 9. "Map of East Texas Oil Field," 1933. Source: Portal to Texas History, University of North Texas.



Greggton Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Figure 10. Advertisement appearing in *The Longview Daily News* in 1931. Source: *The Longview Daily News*, via www.newspapers.com.

'The Main Street Of Texas'

GLADEWATER WESTERN TERMINAL	WILLOW SPRINGS	LONGVIEW EASTERN TERMINAL
--	---------------------------	--

"LARGEST INDUSTRIAL TOWNSITE IN EAST TEXAS"

And

Center Of Gregg Oil Activity

CONGRATULATES THE

|| COUNTY'S GREATEST FAIR

FOLLOWING ARE LEADING BUSINESSES ON "THE MAIN STREET OF TEXAS"—WILLOW SPRINGS

Hamvasy Drug Store No. 2 "Health Headquarters" Curb Service Oasis Camp Ease "The Willow Springs Hotel Home" Brick Cottages With Modern Conveniences Built for High Class People Only—Owned and Operated by J. C. Tyra	H. & H. Service Station "Snooks" Hartley, Proprietor "Home of That Good Gulf Gasoline" J. H. Jones County Commissioner and Willow Springs Booster Seminole Service Station Texaco Products
--	--

Greggton Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Photos

Photo 1. Camera facing northeast down West Marshall Avenue showing all buildings in the proposed historic district (Resource 1 in the foreground, Resource 8 at the far east end).



Greggton Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Photo 2. Camera facing northwest down West Marshall Avenue showing all buildings in the proposed historic district (Resource 1 at the far west end, Resource 8 in the foreground).



Greggton Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Photo 3. Camera facing northwest showing west end of the proposed historic district (Resources 1, 2, and 3). Note the non-historic age building at the end block that is left out of the proposed boundaries.



Greggton Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Photo 4. Camera facing east showing sidewalk along the 3700 block of West Marshall Avenue (photo taken at west side of Resource 4).



Greggton Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Photo 5. Camera facing east showing Aztec Alley to the rear (north) of the 3700 block of West Marshall Avenue.



Greggton Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Photo 6. Camera facing north showing Resource 1 at 3725 West Marshall Avenue.



Greggton Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Photo 7. Camera facing north showing mosaic tile detail depicting oil refinery flare stacks; Resource 1 at 3725 West Marshall Avenue.



Greggton Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Photo 8. Camera facing north showing Resource 2 at 3721 West Marshall Avenue. Resources 1 and 3 are pictured to the left and right, respectively.



Greggton Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Photo 9. Camera facing north showing Resource 3 at 3719 West Marshall Avenue. Resources 2 and 4 are pictured to the left and right, respectively.



Greggton Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Photo 10. Camera facing north showing Resource 4 at 3717 West Marshall Avenue.



Greggton Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Photo 11. Camera facing north showing Resource 5 at 3713 West Marshall Avenue.



Greggton Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Photo 12. Camera facing north showing Resource 6 at 3709-11 West Marshall Avenue. Resources 5 and 7 are pictured to the left and right, respectively.



Greggton Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Photo 13. Camera facing east showing canopies of Resources 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6.



Greggton Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Photo 14. Camera facing north showing Resource 7 at 3705-07 West Marshall Avenue. Resource 8 is pictured to the right.



Greggton Historic District, Gregg County, Texas

Photo 15. Camera facing northwest showing Resource 8 at 3701 West Marshall Avenue. Resource 7 is pictured to the left.

